

## OCULAR ROSACEA

Severe cases of ocular rosacea, which can cause loss of vision, must be treated quickly. If you have ocular irritation, sensitivity to light, a decrease in visual acuity, inflammation of your eyelids or conjunctiva, you should see an ophthalmologist immediately. Another concern with ocular rosacea is the possibility of a secondary infection because a dry environment is a perfect breeding ground for staphylococci bacteria.

### SYMPTOMS

Often associated with acne rosacea, ocular rosacea can cause a number of symptoms including:

- Inflamed, swollen eyelids
- Persistent burning in the eyes
- Gritty feeling in the eyes
- Small, inflamed bumps on the eyelids
- Eyelashes may fall out
- Bloodshot eyes
- Pain
- Photophobia (sensitivity to light)

People suffering with ocular rosacea almost always have bloodshot eyes, dry eyes and blepharitis (inflammation of the eyelid margins). Corneal ulceration may occur in the most severe cases of this eye condition. If left untreated, your eye may become perforated, which is a potentially blinding complication. Symptoms can be treated; however, ocular rosacea is a chronic condition with periods of remissions and times when it worsens. Ocular rosacea requires long-term therapy to control the symptoms.

When outward signs and symptoms of the condition are present, then ocular rosacea is typically accurately diagnosed. Ocular symptoms, however, may occur prior to outward manifestations in 20% of patients with the condition.

### TREATMENT

Antibiotics (tetracycline and doxycycline) have been used effectively to control ocular rosacea symptoms. In some cases, a short course of a corticosteroid solution may be effective for symptomatic relief. The use of liquid tears work for dry eyes and ocular itching.

While there is no cure for rosacea, this condition can be treated. The earlier it is diagnosed and treated, the more manageable the symptoms are.